

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please replace the drawing sheets 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 21 with the attached new drawing sheets.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.312, Applicant respectfully requests the entry of the present amendment.

A Notice of Allowability was issued in the present application on February 6, 2003. Attached to the Notice of Allowability was an Examiner's Amendment. The Examiner's Amendment required changes to the specification and/or drawings. It was pointed out that reference signs 36, 47, 67, 102, 141, 139 and 61 were recited in the drawings, but the reference signs were not described in the present specification. Moreover, the Examiner's Amendment further pointed out that the description for reference signs 92 and 122 was unclear.

The Notice of Allowability also indicated that changes to the drawings were required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO Form - 948) attached to paper no. 13.

Accordingly, the present specification has been amended to correct these informalities. In addition, proposed changes to the drawings are enclosed with this amendment.

The following changes to the drawings are proposed:

In figure 1, the reference sign 36 has been replaced with reference sign 46. Reference sign 46 is described in the present specification on page 15, lines 20-25.

As to reference sign 47, this reference has been removed from Figure 5. Reference signs 67 and 102 have been removed from Figures 7a and 9b, respectively. These reference signs were inadvertently added to the figures and it is believed that they are not necessary for understanding the present invention.

In Figure 7b, reference sign 140 has been replaced with reference sign 141. Reference sign 141 is described in the present specification at page 20, line 11. In addition, reference sign 138 has been replaced with reference sign 139. The Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to page 20, line 10 of the present specification wherein reference sign 139 is described.

As to reference sign 61, Applicant's note that the reference sign is cited at page 16, line 18.

In Figure 8a, reference sign 46 has been inserted in place of reference sign 92. As noted above, reference sign 46 is described as the present specification at page 15, lines 20-25. Reference sign 46 shows a holder. In the present invention,

primary specimen tubes are recapped with original caps and transported to a holding area having holder 46.

In the Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner invited Applicants to review both the specification and drawings to insure that all numerals are present and designate the correct and appropriate elements of both the specification and drawings.

As a result, Applicant's have checked the present specification and drawings for additional informalities. The specification has been amended at pages 15, 19 and 20 to insure that all numerals are present and designate the correct elements. Moreover, Figure 3a has been amended to recite reference sign 61. The drawings have also been further amended to recite the reference sign 189 in Figures 12, 13 and 14. Reference sign 189 is described in the present specification at page 25, lines 25-30.

As it is believed that the changes noted above satisfy the requirements of the Notice of Allowability, the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review, and the attached Examiner's Amendment, formal drawings accompany this amendment.

No additional search and examination is required as the proposed amendments affect only the drawings and specification and do not in any way alter the scope of the claims.

All claims in the application remain patentable as their scope is unaltered by the requested changes to the Figures.

The present amendment was not earlier presented because the changes are made in response to the Examiner's Amendment/comments attached to the Notice of Allowability mailed on February 6, 2003.

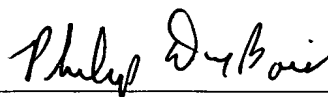
Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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PD/psf